

461 campaign to encourage workers to return to the rural areas to engage in production.²⁵ All in all, the basis of city relief was self-help-through-labor, which was also the emphasis of rural relief policies. For example, in Chungking needy people were organized into handicraft-production teams. Early in 1955, it was reported that in addition to those performing regular and seasonal labor, 32,000 needy people were organized into productive labor teams in Chungking. Among the people who were unable to make a living, including the aged, the cripple, and the young, relief was given to 41,828 families in the period January-October 1954, according to a Communist source.²⁶

735 Beggars, pickpockets, and prostitutes
733 were the subjects of an intensive campaign.
548 It was reported in 1952 that the majority of these three city elements had been sent to institutions for reform and training in productive works.²⁷ In a speech in September 1954, the Communist Minister of Internal Affairs told the National People's Congress that prostitutes, beggars, and opium smokers were "basically

25. Ibid., p. 16.

26. Survey of China Mainland Press, Hong Kong, America Consulate General, No. 1008, Supplements, March 16, 1955, pp. 8-10.

27. New China Daily, Sept. 28, 1952, p. 4.

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133 non-existent" in Communist China and the
735 number of vagrants had been greatly reduced, 28
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V. CHILD WELFARE

527 Following the international practice of
746 dedicating one day in the year to the children, in
193 April 4th was promulgated as China's
Children's Day by the Nationalist Government.
But the Chinese Communist regime changed
this date to June 1st, in accordance with a
decision made by the International Democratic
Women's Federation in 1949 at Moscow. 29
Children's Day as it is celebrated in the United
States and in Great Britain was branded as
capitalistic, i.e., not designed for the well-being
of the children of the laboring classes. Around
June 1st every year, all the propaganda media
are mobilized for the promotion of child welfare,
praise of the happy state of children in Com-
munist China and in the Communist bloc of
nations, and references to the "plight" of
children in the free world. And it is also
around this time in most large cities on the
Mainland of China that health examinations for

28. People's Handbook, 1955, pp. 211-13.

29. Hung Hsin-t'ao, Chi-nien Chieh-jih
Shih-shih Tzu-liao [History of the Memorial
Days], Shanghai, T'ai-lien ch'u-pan she, 1953,
Vol. II, pp. 180-83.

CHAPTER VI

CHUNG-TIEN 中甸

634 The district of Chung-tien, situated north of the Yangtze loop, forms an inverted pyramid, the apex being its southernmost point, the broad base of the pyramid adjoining the new province of Hsi-k'ang the former Ch'uan-pien 川邊, or frontier of Sau-ch'uan, commonly known as the Tibetan Marches. Chung-tien is called Ndzu-dü in Na-khi, and in Tibetan rGyal-thang.

Only the southern half of the region is inhabited by Na-khi, as the district of Bbér-ddér, which adjoins the Yangtze on the east and the mountain range of A-nà Ngyu (A-nà-ngv, An-nan-ku 安南古, also known as Pei-ti Shan 北堆山) to the north; beyond are Tibetans only.

The district of Chung-tien is divided diagonally from north-west to south-east by a stream known to the Chinese as the Chung-chiang Ho 中江河. They call the upper part the Shih-to-kang Ho 碩多岡河, while the Na-khi call the entire stream the Yü-ndo gyi. It is however better known as the Chung-tien Ho 中甸河. It debouches into the Yangtze above the 'A-ts'an-gko gorge. Its source is to the north of Pei-ti Shan (A-nà Ngyu). The lake of Chung-tien is called Ts'ao Hai 草海 by the Chinese and Nda-bpa Khü in Na-khi; the Tibetans call it Na-pa Tsho.

361 The seat of the magistracy is Chung-tien, whence the district derives its name. Chung-tien is situated at an elevation of 11,500 feet on a large grassy

[243] plain too cold to grow anything but wheat, and is inhabited by about 200 families, mostly a mixture of Chinese, Mo-so and Tibetan. Its geographic

[131] position according to Major Davies is latitude 27° 50' and longitude 99° 45'.

• [48] To the north of Chung-tien dwell the notorious robber tribe, the Tong-wa (sTong-wa), the Chinese Tung-wang 東汪.

634 The *Hsü Yün-nan T'ung-chih-kao*, Vol. 12, ch. 9, fols. 11b and 12a, states that during the Han dynasty Chung-tien was in the hsien of Sui-chiu 遂久, subject to Yüeh-sui Chün 越巂郡. Sui-chiu was west of Yung-ning, and is the present Chung-tien. Under the Shu Han (221-264) it belonged to Yün-nan Chün 雲南郡. In the Sui dynasty (590-617) it was the Mi chou 靡州, controlled by the Tu-tu fu 都督府 (Yamen of the military governor) of Jung chou 戎州 (this is the present-day I-pin 宜賓 (Hsü chou 叙州) of Ssu-ch'uan). In the T'ang (618-906) it was also known as Mi chou. Under the Mongols (1280-1367) it belonged to the circuit of Li-chiang. In the Ming dynasty (1368-1643) it was in the prefecture of Li-chiang. In the Ch'ing it remained unaltered. Wu San-kuei 吳三桂 rebelled and gave the land of Chung-tien to the Dalai Lama of Lha-sa.¹ In the fifth year of Yung-cheng (1727) it came under the control of Ho-ch'ing. A Chou-p'an 州判 (District judge) from the chou of Chien-ch'uan (a magistracy between Ta-li and Li-chiang) resided there. In the 21st year of Ch'ien-lung (1756) a change was

¹ According to the *Mu Chronicle* this was in the year 1668, during the rule of Mu Yi (1608-1692), chief of Li-chiang.

735

The beggars call the rice and wine given to them at feasts or New Year time *fa-ts'ai fan* and *fu-kuei chiu* 發財飯 and 富貴酒. It is a kind of good wish for the prosperity of the giver. 'New Year rice' is given to beggars on the first day of New Year; beside this some give New Year money, meat, dumplings, etc. If beggars are diligent at the New Year they can beg enough to keep them for a month or two.

After persons have given money or food to a beggar, the latter says that he has succeeded in instructing his son 訓子 *hün tsü*. Such spectacles as are displayed in most Chinese streets, the displaying of maimed limbs, frost-bitten feet, knocking the head on the paving stones with a thud, candles and incense stuck in hands and shoulders, and anything which works on the feelings of the people are included by beggars under this heading of 'instructing their children.'

Lo men niu 遛閻牛, to follow the stupid ox, is said by beggars who pursue people on the roads asking for alms. To pursue a person on the road and repeatedly waylay him for money or to exact money from the person by blackmail, is called by the beggars, 'chasing the dog.'

A beggar will beset wealthy families and stay for hours at the door bellowing for food. The first time he gets food that day he says that it was his 'big son' 大的兒 *ta ti erh* who gave it him; the second time it is the 'second son,' and so on. These things make the beggars hated by many people, and a class which is loathsome to behold becomes also repugnant to the kindest of hearts.

* * *

ROBBERS 盜賊 *tao tsei*.

● 548

These are divided into several classes, the following being a few of them:

Flying thieves, 飛賊 *fei tsei*. These enter the house by going over the roof with a pole; their sandals being made of human hair. In the day time they pretend to be sleepy, lazy fellows, but when they go to steal they can fly over the beam or walk on the partition' 飛梁走壁 *fei liang tsou pi*.

THE TIBETAN FOOTHILLS

69

This kind of thief can get at the silver no matter where it is placed; and only takes silver and gold. He leaves the other things for a lower caste thief. It is generally believed that he has some dealings with evil spirits. When he goes out for a depredation it is spoken of as 出馬, or to take out the horses. 548 •

Shang fang tzu 上房子, to go on the roof. This class of thief enters by the roof and leaves by the door. At the door he has an assistant waiting to whom he hands his booty, who in turn gives it over to the carrier who runs with it.

Shun shou 順手, to take what lies to hand. This is done by people who in their own town are reckoned to be good and responsible citizens, but go from home to do business of this kind. The proverb has it that 黃鸞不打窩下食, 好賊不偷自家人, 'the eagle will not take the food of its own nest, and the thief will not steal from his own household.'

The local head of thieves gets a large share of the booty 坐地分肥 *tao ti fên fei*. When a thief comes to any district he makes arrangements with the local head of the thieves, who then becomes surety for him. When robbers are about to commit a robbery they always have a person acquainted with the house, called a *haien tzu k'ê* 線子客 or spy. Hence the proverb which says *tsai wu ch'ueh t'ou pu ch'u* 賊無脚偷不出; 'a thief who has no footing cannot steal.'

Their first work is to count their men, to each of whom a cash-string is given, (these strings are counted on their return; if they are short one string they know that one man is wanting, and they may possibly go back to release him; unless they have reason to think that he is dead.) Oil is then spilt over a pile of cash paper, which is burned as an offering to the spirits, asking for success in their adventure. Brown paper is then soaked in oil and rosin, and made into small torches, which are lighted and stuck on the front of each person's hat. The men's faces are all blackened or made up with hideous colours. Each man has his work allotted. Some carry the battering ram or *niu êrh tzu* 牛兒子 for smashing open the door. Others carry hatchets and weapons for self-protection. Some are detailed to watch the

548 four sides of the house, and give warning if help is arriving. The cry of *chung shui* 漲水 'the flood is rising,' is a sign that the neighbours have risen to protect the family. After the robbery is completed, there is what is known as *tien chiang pai hua* 點將擺花 count the men and display the booty. Any dead are carried away with them if possible, and disposed of in the most convenient way, for fear of leaving any trace of the origin of the band. The head of the gang gets 40 per cent. and the remaining 60 per cent. goes to the men who have done the work. The division is made after all expenses of the raid have been deducted.

Robbery by piercing a wall requires an instrument known as the *ao tao* 撐刀 or *ch'iao tao* 撬刀, a crowbar. After a hole has been pierced through the wall, a bamboo with a handful of straw tied on the end of it is pushed inside to see if the way is clear; all being well the thief crawls in feet first, for fear of getting a bang on the head, and so as to be able to crawl quickly out again in case of alarm.

When a character of this sort reaches a strange place he will draw a picture on a blank wall, such as a head with a moustache on one side of the mouth only. Other particular classes of thieves draw the picture of a single hand or foot. The picture of a head without any hands means that the thief is in need of an assistant. When the local thieves see these they draw another figure of the same kind close to it giving secret directions as to where he will find a lodging and companions. The day-light thief is called a *爬兒* *pa ér*, the night worker *黑頭殼* *hei tuo-k'o*, black head. Pickpockets are known as *p'a ko ér* 扒哥兒, *lao chu* 老扯 or *shua ér* 刷兒, *hung p'an p'an* 紅盤盤, *hung lao piao* 紅老表 red-haired cousin, etc. The burglar who opens partitions *割壁* *ko pi*, carries a pair of strong scissors, and thus bamboo and lime partitions are easily taken out. Once inside the house he soon tears open the doors and prepares a way of escape. Even the dogs seem to have a wholesome fear of this class and dare not bark till after they have gone. A troublesome dog is poisoned by giving it human hair chopped very fine and rolled inside meat or fish. This seems to be fatal, as the animal can neither digest the dose nor vomit it.

THE TIBETAN FOOTHILLS

71

The art of the horse, pig and ox stealer is called *t'ai mén* 抬門, lifting the door. He carries, besides his fuse and other weapons, a tube of water which is poured into the wooden hinges of the door to keep them from squeaking. When a pig is the object of theft it is given *hua chi-wo* 花椒 or red pepper; this benumbs its mouth so that it cannot squeal, and is thus more easily carried out of the place. When an ox is stolen, as soon as it is outside the door, a man takes hold of each horn and another takes the tail; the man behind pricks the ox with a goad, making it run furiously and heedless of all obstacles away from the house. Horses are taken off in a similar manner. In stealing ducks or chickens the necks are seized and tied; while cats are put in a sack.

Thieves are naturally very superstitious. Many of them carry on their person the wooden image of a dog with an iron band round its nose, to keep it from barking or biting, as dogs are their chief fear and natural enemy. They are very much afraid of any combination of words having *fan* 飯 and *fa* 髮 in them. Even to eat rice is known by them as *ch'uo fán tsü* 搗粉子. Their chief object is to avoid detection; one might almost say that the only sin is the loss of face on being caught. They also have a superstitious dread of the following words: *ti chu* 抵注 to get up against; *ch'uang tao* 撞倒 to knock against, and *k'ung shou* 空手 empty-handed: a thief if he enters a house will do all in his power to carry something away with him, however small, as it is most unlucky for him to leave empty-handed; *ma tzu*, 馬子, an enemy: the master of the house is the natural enemy of the thief; *liang* 亮, light: their works being evil they hate the light. Each clique has a particular call by which it is known; some mew like a cat, others blow a bamboo whistle; others have a call like *wa Au*, while others have a song. Any householder hearing these sounds close by gives a warning to his household, and calls out for the thief to come in and he will give him a "light for his pipe;" with the mention of light the thief very often departs. In entering a tea shop they call for water, not for boiling water or hot water as other people do, as these expressions are used by them to indicate that trouble is coming. They also hate the words *ju shun chou* 不順手.

548 that is, it won't come to hand. They also fear *pu tui t'ou*
 777 不對頭, or unsuitable. The number four is never used by
 them as it is the same sound as 'trouble.' So on the 3rd and
 4th of each month, also on the 14th and 24th they cease
 their depredations. Owing to the light of the moon, little or
 no work of their kind is done from the 3rd to the 16th of each
 moon, but with the exception of the 24th they go on almost
 unceasingly from that time to the end of the month. The
 thief also dreads the character *ch'ieh* 截, to cut off, fearing
 that his head will be sliced off.

In carrying on his depredations whatever comes into his
 hand is reckoned to be his rightful property; but if a thief has
 got no stolen property in his possession it is impossible to
 impeach him; the saying runs 盜賊無贖硬如鐵棒 'a
 thief with no stolen property is hard as an iron bar,' and he
 will no brook any aspersion on his character. The saying
 also runs 拿賊要拿贖拿姦要拿雙 'catching a thief,
 catch his stolen property; catching adulterers, catch the pair.'
 No greater insult can be thrown at any family than to say
 that they are *nan tao nü ch'ang* 男盜女娼, the males
 thieves and the women harlots.

This class of men much resent another person putting
 their feet on the end of a stool while they are still sitting on it;
 the fear being that they will be locked up and made to sit down.
 They also resent anyone taking hold of the pipe while they
 are smoking, or taking hold of their queue while they are
 walking. They also fear any one standing on the bed to
 dress, or tilting any article on its side to get anything out, or
 lifting up the basin with the vegetables in it to pour some
 gravy over their rice.

Pacific Affairs

575 the Ko Lao Hui keeps the closest watch over government policy, especially where it considers its own interests to be concerned.

662 An illustration of how the Ko Lao Hui functions in this respect may be seen in the typical case of Huang Jun Chin, branch director in the village of Yuan Tung. To the people who live in it, Yuan Tung seems less a village than a country of which Huang is king. He owns some 400 acres of land and several thousand side arms which are borne by 3,000 men (all society members) directly under his command. In the county seat he and some of his men occupy a huge mansion fortified with machine-gun emplacements. Several close relatives hold important positions in the municipal and provincial governments. Although they are paid by the county government, two platoons of guards and policemen are armed with Huang's guns and are answerable to him alone. His men are also in the magistrate's office; in fact, the magistrate is no more than a figurehead whose function it is to transmit government orders to Huang and to await his instructions. The county administration takes no action without Huang's prior consent. He not only presides over the county council, but appoints all of its other members. Huang's case is typical of the power of the society which, though essentially non-political, frequently interferes with, and occasionally assumes direct control of, county government.¹²

575 Each branch of the society derives its regular income from a number of sources, of which opium dens are the most important. In one locality there are ten such dens, each run by a different high-ranking member. Each must contribute a definite sum to the branch, as must the semi-secret gambling houses and brothels. Illegal transactions in prohibited goods such as arms, gasoline and other vital war materials are effected under the supervision and protection of the society, which collects a fee on each transaction. Another source of income is the "market" where, though no goods are handled, such commodities as rape seed, rice and the like are bought and sold in wholesale quantities; since no goods are in evidence, the government agent, if he is present, sees nothing on which to levy a tax, but the society, keeping a com-

¹² Of course, the society manifests its power in other ways. For example, local coal mines and salt works cannot move their products to market unless they have paid the society large sums on each shipment. Before making tours of inspection in the districts of the Chengtu Plain, government officials are expected to notify, and to secure the protection of, Ko Lao Hui officials. This procedure is necessary because bandits, county guards and administrators are usually all members of the society.